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- LL 1 -

A L B A N I A

Apr. 8, 1954

KABASHI INTERROGATED AT TIRANA TRIAL

Tirana, Albanian Home Service, Apr. 5, 1954, 2100 GMT--M

(Recording of interrogation of Ahmet Agush Kabashi at the Tirana trial)

(Excerpts)

Acting on the basis of the law, the President of the Court, Shuaip Panariti, asked the Prosecutor, the accused, and the defense council if they had any objection to the witnesses and experts. As there was no objection of any kind, the President of the court gave the floor to the Prosecutor, who read the indictment.

Then the General Prosecutor spoke on the activities of this diversionist group, as well as on the criminal activities of each of the members of this group. After the reading of the indictment by the General Prosecutor, the interrogation of the accused began. First to be interrogated was the accused Ahmet Agush Kabashi.

President--tell me how long you stayed ....

Kabashi: We stayed there about 2 or 3 months. During this period IRO used time after time to post notice as to who wanted to emigrate to Australia and America ....

Q--Who was administering the camp?

A--Italians.

Q--Was the camp guarded?

A--...by all.

Q--Were there any guards?

A--Yes, there were khorofilax (gendarmes--Ed.).

Q--What?

A--No, Italian gendarmes.

Q--And?

A--It was producing orders for emigrating to foreign countries--again ... entrusting criminals such as Xhafer Deva, Abas Kupi, and others who were gathering the people around and telling them not to emigrate, because

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OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 2 -

ALBANIA

Apr. 8, 1954

Q--Who out of these people came to the camp? Tell me, did anyone come there?

A--Kol Bib Miraka, Xhafer Deva, Mithat Fresheri, and Vasil Andoni came to the camp. Finally, Abas Kupa came there from Egypt.

Q--Tell us, why were they coming to the camp?

A--They were coming--when Kol Bib Miraka came there, I could not get in touch with him, but ... some Catholics did. His arrival was supposed to be a visit--their aim espionage--and that we should get a group and smuggle it in against the Albanian People's Regime by means of the English, Americans, or Italians. After he left, Vasil Andoni came and on his order a group of 10 or 15 people from the south, headed by Ali Trubhova--the names of the rest, I do not remember the names of the rest of them--was (formed). It was said that they were to be sent to Bagnoli camp. Two days after they left the camp, we heard from the members of their party rumors ... that they were smuggled into Albania by the English and Americans.

Next, Alush Leshanjaku came to the camp. He was accompanied by Xhevdet Bloshmi. He came for a so-called 2-day visit. After 3 or 4 days he (selected) a group from the independent bloc, which included Catholics and people from Elbasan, and at night time and with the knowledge of the khorofilax--of the Italian carabinieri--(left the camp). Next morning... came and carried out a search throughout the bedrooms checking who was present and who was not, because perhaps they were hidden there. But, in fact, they themselves took and accompanied them out of the camp.

After Alush Leshanjaku's and Xhevdet Bloshmi's visit, Abas Kupa came from Egypt. He had come to make contact about the problem of this so-called committee Zog had sent to get in touch with them, but they had refused. For what reason, I do not know. When Abas Kupa came he kept telling Seadi Baja from Delvine and Hysen Terpeza that he intended to form a committee; to form a committee, thereby assembling all the emigrants and through the anglo-Americans smuggling them into Albania to liquidate the People's Regime.

Q--With whom were they going to form this committee?

A--They were going to form it by the support of the Anglo-Americans.

Q--Who were the persons?

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 3 -

ALBANIA

Apr. 8, 1954

A--Abas Kupa came there and said that he had come to form a committee, but leaving the place he did not take with him the persons they had agreed on--others were taken instead. He asked for the son of Gjon Mark Gjoni, but not Gjon Mark Gjoni, and Mithat Frasherri, leaving out some others.

Q--Who were these men? Do you know them; do you know that they have done here?

A--Some of them I know personally.

Q--Tell us, do you know, or have you heard about their biography?

A--I have heard.

Q--What have you heard?

A--Their history--that a committee has been formed under the title "Free Albania."

Q--But tell me, who are the men, of whom is this committee composed?

A--The committee includes Mithat Frasherri. He was head of the committee. But 10 or 15 days after the committee was formed, Mithat Frasherri died in New York. He was then replaced by Hasan Dosti, who is also heading it at present.

Q--Can you tell us about the type and the background of these persons and about what they did in Albania during the war?

A--These men are murderers of the Albanian people. As to what I have heard about them, the criminal Xhafer Deva, on Feb. 4, 1943, committed mass murder in Albanian territory--he murdered and butchered.

Q--Tell us with whom they collaborated during the National Liberation War?

A--They collaborated with the Nazis and Fascists.

Q--What are they now doing abroad?

A--They are engaged in the same job.

Q--With whom are they now doing that job?

A--Now, they are doing it with the Americans, English.

Q--Speak up!

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- LL 4 -

ALBANIA

Apr. 8, 1954

A--Italians, Greeks. Xhafer Deva came and told us that he wanted six people to smuggle into Kosove on a mission for the Americans. We came out from the camp by means of the khorofilax--Italian carabinieri. They used to permit five to six persons per day to go out of the camp until about 2000 hours. Permission was granted to us, and so we went out of the camp. Riza Aliu met Xhafer Deva, who was accompanied by an Italian person called (Logniti). We met Xhafer Deva and together went to a restaurant. There we had lunch. Xhafer Deva paid the bill.

After having lunch, he told us: "I have taken you in order to send you on a mission to Kosove. I am in touch with the Americans, but in order not to expose them we shall carry on our work through the Italians--Italians instructors. You will be smuggled and carry out the work which we have started. The aim of my tour is to select agents for the Americans. But when I became an American agent I also became an agent of the Italians or Greeks. They are all the same."

In September 1949 we had finished learning how to operate the radio, to read the ciphers, to use the compass, and read maps.

Q--Who else was there with you?

A--With us were (Marinati), the Italian, Riza Aliu, myself, Beqir Bejgora, Hajredin Vuciterna, Destan Berisha, and Shaqir (Kallolli).

Q--Was it only radio operating you were taught or were you taught other things?

A--At first we all were taught radio operating, but Beqir Bejgora, Hajredin, and Destan were not able to follow the course because they were semiilliterate or illiterate. So we three--Riza, myself, and Shaqir--followed the course.

Q--You were only taught radio operating?

A--We only learned radio operating.

Q--Good, where did you go next?

A--In September 1949, Xhafer Deva once more appeared. He said that our affairs are not going well, but he did not give any reason. Then he left the place. Later on he again sent a message.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 5 -

ALBANIA

Apr. 8, 1954

At the end of May 1949--at the end of May 1950--he sent an Italian to take us by car, because (we were left) on the road. ... we took the train at Bari, and together with them we went to a place called Frascatti in Rome to a secret house. We attended this course with the intention of coming here, but as I told you the diversionists had a very hard time entering Albania. We finished the course. We all agreed with the Italians, Americans, British, and with all who are with them.

Prosecutor--Allow me, allow me, Comrade President.

Listen accused. Certainly, certainly, it has been like that, but do not hide the facts. It is clear that since the beginning you have been an agent of Italian espionage. They recruited you and instructed you; they were your instructors and you were instructed in their centers. You have used their radio sets in Rome. This fact has no meaning to you, but this has a great importance to us, to all the world.

Accused--Yes..

Prosecutor--This shows that, listen accused, this shows that the American imperialists in order to achieve their criminal deeds and their criminal plans took the Fascist agents into their service. (They have received not only the plans) of Mussolini and Hitler, they have not only used them for carrying out their crimes even to the worst. The crimes were executed by those criminals--old agents of Mussolini and of Hitler.

President--Tell us, where did you go next?

A--By plane, we landed in Mirdite, the lower Kthelle, Mirdite.

Q--What kind of plane was it?

A--An American plane, piloted by Italians.

Q--From which airport did you take off?

A--From Rome.

Q--From Rome?

A--Yes, sir.

Q--Right, proceed.

A--We landed there the night after some other friends--

Q--Right.

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- LL 6 -

ALBANIA  
Apr. 8, 1954

A--Some other friends who (had exiled themselves with me. From there, we went to another place ...).

Q--What?

A--(We believed that we were surrounded by security forces.) We told them that we were sent by Xhafer Deva and .... We met the security forces. Here, Riza Alia was shot. Ndocgjini and another exiled Catholic were wounded in this fight. We left our material and everything we had with us.

Announcer--The accused Ahmet Kabashi confessed then about his (struggle to remain in Albania), although he tried to execute the orders he had received from the espionage center in Rome. As he could not stay in the country, he left for Greece. Again, he was sent to Albania on a mission as a diversionist by the American espionage service. Once again, he reentered Greece. Through the Greek espionage service, he made contact with the American espionage service in Greece. Ahmet Kabashi was stationed in Piraeus, and from there he was brought to Athens by car. He told the court the following:

I and two Greeks went to Athens .... About a quarter of an hour after we arrived at the destination, a jeep appeared. Two Americans whom I had never seen were in this jeep. Then, together with the two Greeks, we left the place. We left the two Greeks at Alodhapon (Greek alien's bureau--Ed.). From there we headed for Glifadha. I was left in a house where Zenel Shehu and his group had been dwelling. Leaving the place, the Americans told me that the commandant would come and see me the next day. The next day, as they said, the commandant appeared. His name was Qose ....

On Dec. 26-27, we left Athens for Elephsina Airport in order to be dropped into Albania. But, as the weather conditions were not favorable, we had to return. On Jan. 27, 1953, they rearmed me with a tommy gun, a revolver, and poison pills. On Jan. 28--no, on Jan. 29--they gave me a letter for Zenel Shehu. Meanwhile, Qose, the American, told me to convey his regards to Zenel Shehu from the American colonel. "Tell him that I am very thankful for what he has accomplished. We have informed Zog of your activities." On this occasion I understood that Zog was in touch with the service of the (Americans). He added that a group would be sent to Mirdite, but ... Zenel Shehu, by all means, should leave for Greece. He should cross through the Albanian-Yugoslav border and not through the Albanian-Greek border.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 7 -

ALBANIA  
Apr. 8, 1954

President--Tell us what was the concrete task you were entrusted with?

A--I will tell you, Mr.

Q--Tell us your task?

A--I had to go there, to Zenel Shehu, and transmit all the information he had collected.

Q--What kind of work were you to do there for Zenel Shehu?

A--I had to operate the radio and work out the ciphers.

Q--When did you start?

A--We left on Jan. 28.

Prosecutor--Allow me, Comrade President:

It is the moment in which the case has reached its climax. Here, therefore, the case should be clear. This moment is the final road, the last step in which Ahmet Kabashi, the accused, reaches his treacherous path. From an Italian spy, Ahmet Kabashi became an American spy. He placed himself in the service of the new masters who have undertaken to accomplish Mussolini's and Hitler's works.

As is realized, the accused has for a long period--with the greatest obstinacy and regardless of the hardships--not abandoned his activities. Because of the work he has accomplished, which he is surely hiding and is reluctant to admit, the Americans have given him higher responsibility. And, as the accused is explaining at this moment, the Americans sent him into Albania as a member of the Zenel Shehu criminal band. This band is not similar to the ordinary ones which have come to our country. It is entrusted with another task--to organize and launch an uprising in Albania.

As will become evident as the case develops, American imperialism had since the beginning of the Second World War, as well as during it, put its hand on these men. Then, for this same purpose, it got together all the war criminals from all places. The accused admits that the Bulgarians were there too.

Accused--Yes.

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-ILL 8 -

ALBANIA  
Apr. 8, 1954

Prosecutor--The Bulgarians are operating from bases in Greece against Bulgaria. It is they who operate, it is they who attack, it is they who intervene. On the other hand, their propaganda screams and says that it is the Albanian Army, or the People's Republic of Albania and Bulgaria--you understand, and so forth--which are causing border provocations endangering our independence and other things I do not know about. But these facts purely reveal who is the intervener, who threatens, and who is involved in complicating home affairs.

These facts indicate clearly for what purpose the pacts are concluded--the Balkan and the Atlantic Pacts--and what the rearmament race is for. It is for the arms they need. They state through propaganda that they are for the so-called defense, but in fact they are used to attack the free peoples and thus deprive them of their freedom and independence. It is for this very purpose that the accused Ahmet Kabashi has been smuggled here. He has been sent here as a member of a band which is quite different than the other bands which have been sent into Albania. He has been smuggled here not only for radio transmitting (Prosecutor stutters--Ed.). However, his transmitting job is of great importance, because, after all, the criminal's hand was going to transmit something which surely was not achieved and will never be achieved. He would have transmitted, such as "we are in extraordinary good conditions." It means "you can attack." It means "you can intervene on the borders of the People's Republic of Albania."

This is the grtest crime that a traitor can commit. It is this crime which Ahmet Kabashi has undertaken to carry out. It is for this crime that criminal Ahmet Kabashi has been sent here by the Americans. It is for this crime he has been smuggled. Therefore, he should not present it as an easy (unimportant) affair. He came here to transmit news (information--Ed.) by radio. He says so, but he says it in a different way because the radio news was to request arms, because the news wanted bombs for killing people--to kill people, kill more and more.

President--What other material did you have?

A--Material. I did not have anything to carry to the (destination), but I am told--I did not see--that there were rifles, tommy guns, and bombs.

Q--Tell us, what you had in your possession.

A--Oh! You mean me.

Q--Did you have any document in your possession?

A--Yes. I did.



OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 9 -

ALBANIA

Apr. 8, 1954

Q--What kind of document?

A--On the 29th, the second day, ... the (American) gave us two letters, two newspapers, and the verbal instructions which were given to me on the 28th. The instructions were written on paper. I have read half of the letter. It states as follows: Dear friends, I wish you a happy new year in 1953, with success and (Kabashi interrupted by an unidentified voice saying "yes, very successfully done." Letter reading continues--Ed.) Congratulations on your activities. We are very satisfied--(Kabashi interrupted by Prosecutor--Ed.)

Prosecutor--Allow me to read this the letter, written in Albanian?

Kabashi--Yes, yes. (Kabashi interrupted by unidentified voice--Ed.) A letter written in the way the person chatters on "the Voice of America."

Prosecutor, reading letter--Dear friends, I am forwarding to you regards and good wishes.

(Prosecutor pauses and remarks--Ed.) These should be quoted on my behalf and on behalf of all of us--the hopes were in vain.

Letter--The King is aware of your good work. We are informing him of your progress.

Prosecutor--this traitor is ... here mentioned. He, the Al Capone of Egypt, the hated contrabandist, who is not satisfied with the money which he obtains from cotton and other dealings but wants to gain more blood by selling the Albanian people--something which he never can do.

As a consequence, all these people have been reduced to being spies and agents in the service of foreigners. Now that the people gave the hard blow, they all, from Ahmet Kabashi to the criminal traitor Zog, have been reduced to simple degenerate agents. There is nothing worse than this situation. They deserve to be where they are.

(Prosecutor continues to read letter--Ed.) The King is aware of the good work you are doing. We have kept him informed of your progress. Your situation has been discussed with the King. He, as always, is very much worried about Tahir's health.

Prosecutor--Oh! Naturally, this is not true.

Letter--naturally, we hope that you will continue to stay there and carry on the work. However, this matter is to be decided by the captain of your group, and the captain has decided that it is possible to stay because such is Captain Zenel Shehu.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 10 -

ALBANIA

Apr. 8, 1954

Prosecutor--after such idle gossip. It means throwing dust into a person's eyes.

They say: Letter--we have requested that your captain should be returned to the base by spring time to give us a full report.

Prosecutor--that means he should go (to obtain) new and definite instructions for launching the uprising.

Letter--We are continuously considering your situation. We are constantly thinking of you. We are doing our best to send you help.

Prosecutor--"Fortunately, the moment which they cannot help any longer has arrived."

Furthermore, there are other letters which, as usual, request information of a military nature. Then, there are other questions, such as "what are the feelings of the Albanian people toward the National Committee for a Free Albania? This makes it very clear (why) Americans want to know about the feelings of the Albanian people toward the National Committee for a Free Albania. It means that in this confession, as well as in the others, it indicates that Mithat Frasheri, that other fellow--what is his name?--Hasan Dosti, Abas Kupa, and all the members of the Committee were in fact going to the camp to appoint spies, to appoint main agents.

So what would the feelings of the Albanian people be for this treacherous committee, for the National Committee for a Free Albania, in whose ranks : participate such criminals? We are pointing to one from the ranks--not from the leaders--for instance, the criminal Ali Kelcyra of whom, through leaflets, they announced with joy that he had joined the committee.

Let us see who is this Ali Kelcyra? The fact that Ali Kelcyra is a member of the committee is sufficient to show that the enemies and criminals abroad--today, agents of the American imperialists--have been traitors through all their lives. For instance, let us take Ali Kelcyra. Who is this man Ali Kelcyra? A member of the National Committee for a Free Albania. It is sufficient to cast an eye in his direction after the Apr. 7, 1939, episode in order to know about him. This is Ali Kelcyra and the National Committee for a Free Albania, to whom the Americans have entrusted the liberation of Albania.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 11 -

ALBANIA  
Apr. 8, 1954

(Prosecutor reads Ali Kelcyra's letter to Mussolini--Ed.)

"To the Duce of Fascism. At this very solemn moment of our national life (Prosecutor remarks that this was at the moment of the arrival of Fascists in Albania--Ed.) we are addressing you as the only arbiter of the destiny of our Fatherland." This is Ali Kelcyra. "Today, more than ever before, the Albanian nation will justly appreciate such generous gesture of Fascist Italy as a gesture in its favor. We are convinced that Italy, the classic Fatherland of freedom." (Prosecutor concludes reading of letter with incomplete sentence--Ed.)

This is how freedom is conceived by the agents of the Free Committee, the men of the Free Committee, or what the devil it is called. That is how freedom is conceived by them: Classicism--Fascist Italy, classic Fatherland of freedom--and it is this classicism of freedom which Americans ....

(Prosecutor continues to read letter--Ed.)

"(Invasion) does not aim at enslaving the Albanian people, but at (leaving) them free ...."

This was said at a time when the Italian Army had come into our country, and not when Zog was economically and politically selling Albania through concessions--exactly when the black feather Fascists had arrived in our country.

"The Albanian Nation is ready to recognize all the legal and vital interests of Italy in a free and independent Albania headed by a prince of the glorious House of Savoy as the devoted King of the Albanians. We are ready to confirm solemnly this expression of the free will of all our people by means of an assembly. May it please Your Excellency to consider favorably the legal aspirations of the Albanian people and to accept our homage. (Signed) Ali Kelcyra, former parliamentary representative.

President--when were your parachuted?

A--I was parachuted on Jan. 29, 1953.

Q--by what means did you come here?

A--a German light machine gun, (tommy-gun), a Berretta Italian revolver, a German Walther, and a poison tablet.

Q--why did you want the poison?

A--to poison myself in order not to be taken alive.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 12 -

ALBANIA

Apr. 8, 1954

Q--Who supplied you with the poison?

A--The American.

Q--Who is that American?

A--Qose.

Q--What else did you have in your possession?

A--Two newspapers and the letters which were read by the Prosecutor, arms, clothing and footwear, 273 gold sovereigns and Louis, and a false identity document.

Q--What name did your document bear?

A--I do not remember. I did not have a chance to read it because I was captured by the security forces. I do not remember it. I have forgotten it.

Q--Did the Americans not ask you when they gave you a false name?

A--Who? they?

Q--es, did they not?

A--No. If it was something like--Tomi, Tom, but I do not remember. It was a Catholic name.

Prosecutor--Allow me, Comrade President.

Q--What were you going to do with the gold Louis?

A--The American called Qose sent the money to me before my departure, and suggested that I convey to Zenel Shehu the regards of the American colonel and to tell him that he was ready to supply him with anything he needed--arms, money, gold coins, anything he needed--in order to use them for bringing friends or enemies to serve the cause.

Q--ight, did they not know, though you, that in the Albania of today money does not work?

A--hey were informed that Zenel Shehu had established large-scale bases in Albania.

q--Since they gave them to you, they did not know, but all that is happening now will make them understand.

President--ell, what else did you have in your possession?

A--I had clothing, a knife, and bombs, which probably were put with the clothing.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 13 -

ALBANIA  
Apr. 8, 1954

Q--Did you not know? Are you not sure?

A--I am not sure, because I did not have them on me.

Q--Well, tell us by what means of travel did you start?

A--We started off with tommyguns.

Q--What? Tell us what means of travel you used--walking?

A--By air.

Q--What kind of airplane was it?

A--An American airplane.

Q--From what place did you start?

A--From the Elevsina Airfield.

Q--Where did you land?

A--At (Linos).

Q--On what date?

A--On Jan. 29, 1953.

Q--On what date were you captured?

A--Ah, that very moment.

Prosecutor--Allow me Comrade Chairman. It is necessary to clear up a matter before the court. This is in connection with the activities of their masters. The matter is the following: Accused, do you know how to pilot a plane?

A--No.

Q--Did you ever hire a plane when you came?

A--No, sir.

Q--Comrade judges, the "Voice of America" in its propaganda of lies, and in order to hide the criminal activities, has said that in connection with the communique of our Government on the activities of these spies these people may have hired a plane and come to Albania. This is the greatest proof of American degeneration. Is it possible that criminal Ahmet Kabashi might have hired a plane to come to Albania?

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- LL 14 -

ALBANIA  
Apr. 8, 1954

Announcer--This is the end of Ahmet Kabashi's interrogation. The chairman declared the first session closed. The second session will be opened on Apr. 6 at 0900 hours.

B R I E F S

ELECTION MEETING--On the occasion of the opening of the campaign for elections to the People's Assembly, the Presidium of the Democratic Front for Tirana on Apr. 6 held a meeting in the capital which was attended by about 50,000 people. The meeting was addressed by Fiqrete Shehu, First Secretary of the Party Committee for Tirana Region. She said: "The results obtained in the elections which took place during March for the organs of the local power and in which the participation in polling and the votes cast in favor of the candidates of the Democratic Front throughout country have been higher than 99.5 percent, are a striking proof of the iron unity of the Albanian people in the ranks of the Democratic Front around the Workers Party of Albania and the people's power." (Tirana, ATA, English, Apr. 7, 1954, 1615 GMT--M)

WOMEN'S UNION--On Apr. 6 at the conference hall of the "Ali Kelmendi" Palace of Culture in Tirana the sixth plenary meeting of the Albanian Women's Union took place with the following agenda: The tasks of the Albanian Women's Union as regards the putting into life of the decisions of the December plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Albanian party of labor. A report on the tasks facing the Albanian Women's Union concerning putting into life the decisions of the December plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Albanian Labor Party was delivered by Vito Kapo, Vice President of the Women's Union of Albania. (Tirana, ATA, English, Apr. 7, 1954, 1625 GMT--M)